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# Guardian

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MNB (E) Soldiers:  
**Lessons Learned**  
*Special Edition*

# Message to the troops



## Thank you 5 Bravo

By Brig. Gen. Rick Erlandson,  
Commander MNB(E)

"From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded."

On 10 Oct 2003, this great task force was called to serve. It truly has been an honor and a privilege to have served in Kosovo with all the great Soldiers of Multi-national Brigade (East). You answered the call to serve and you have exceeded my expectations for mission success over the past year. The complexities of a peacekeeping mission make it difficult to define success. Success for us means helping the local population realize they are responsible for their own future.

Our successes are a direct result of what our great Soldiers at the platoon, squad and team level do each and every day. You work with municipal leaders, municipal assemblies, and the population to facilitate them in making the difficult and right decisions on a daily basis. You were there when violence broke out in March, reacting in a rapid, disciplined manner — saving countless lives and untold property damage. You facilitated the return of K-Serb farmers in the Zegra and Zintze area, as well as, bringing

displaced K-Serbs back to Urosevac/ Ferizaj, Vitina/ Viti, Babljak and Gjilane. The Kosovo Police Service now has the lead in five of the seven police stations in our area of responsibility with a sixth to occur 26 Aug. 04. You have facilitated the Kosovo Protection Service in doing emergency projects and training in their role as a civil response agency. You have conducted MEDCAPS across all task force sectors designed to help people understand the importance of living and working together. You have initiated and developed multi-ethnic youth programs, distributed school supplies and delivered clothing items donated by generous people back home. These are just a few of the many successes you can take pride in.

We now have an additional mission to complete that is as important a mission as any other performed — set KFOR 6 Alpha up for success. Today because of our experience we are the experts on peacekeeping in Kosovo. 6 Alpha follows close behind and their initial start in mission will rely heavily on what each and every one of us passes on to the great Soldiers of the 38th Infantry Division. We welcome Task Force Falcon 6 Alpha to Multi-national Brigade (East), we wish them all well in their mission and we promise we will do everything we can to



## Brig. Gen. Rick Erlandson

set them up for success.

You, the Soldiers of Task Force Falcon/ Multi-national Brigade (East), have executed the mission each and every day to standard. Leaders and Soldiers have focused on solid risk management and assessment procedures that have produced outstanding results. I personally thank you for your efforts. You, the Soldiers of Task Force Falcon and your loved ones are responsible for the success of this task force. We all have the privilege of living in a country that is free. You have given 11 months of service to allow the people of Kosovo a chance for a better future. You have made a difference in the lives of the people of Kosovo. The time to return home to awaiting families and friends is near. You can return home knowing that you have made a positive impact during our time in mission. Be proud of what you have accomplished. Return home with your heads held high knowing that you have made a difference. May God Bless each of you and thank you all for a job well done, Attack!

Submissions or story ideas related to the MNB(E) mission are encouraged. Send regular mail to MNB(E) PAO, Attn: Editor, Camp Bondsteel, APO AE 09340; send e-mail to [guardianeast@bondsteel2.aur.army.mil](mailto:guardianeast@bondsteel2.aur.army.mil).

*COVER: Spc. Shawn Schmidt, an engineer with Task Force Redhorse, readies explosives during training on field expedient methods to open doors. Photo by Sgt. Jon Soucy.*

*See page 10 for the story.*

## Guardian East

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## Task Force Desperado

The task force passes on lessons learned during their time to the incoming Task Force Phoenix.

## Task Force Bayonet

The task force passes on lessons learned during their time to the incoming Task Force Lancer.

## Task Force Dragoon

The task force passes on lessons learned during their time to the incoming Task Force Protector.

## Task Force Redhorse

The task force passes on lessons learned during their time to the incoming Task Force Shield.

## Task Force Med Falcon

The task force passes on lessons learned during their time to the incoming Soldiers of Task Force Med Falcon 10.

## Farwell 5 Bravo

Photos of Task Force Falcon 5 Bravo during their time here.

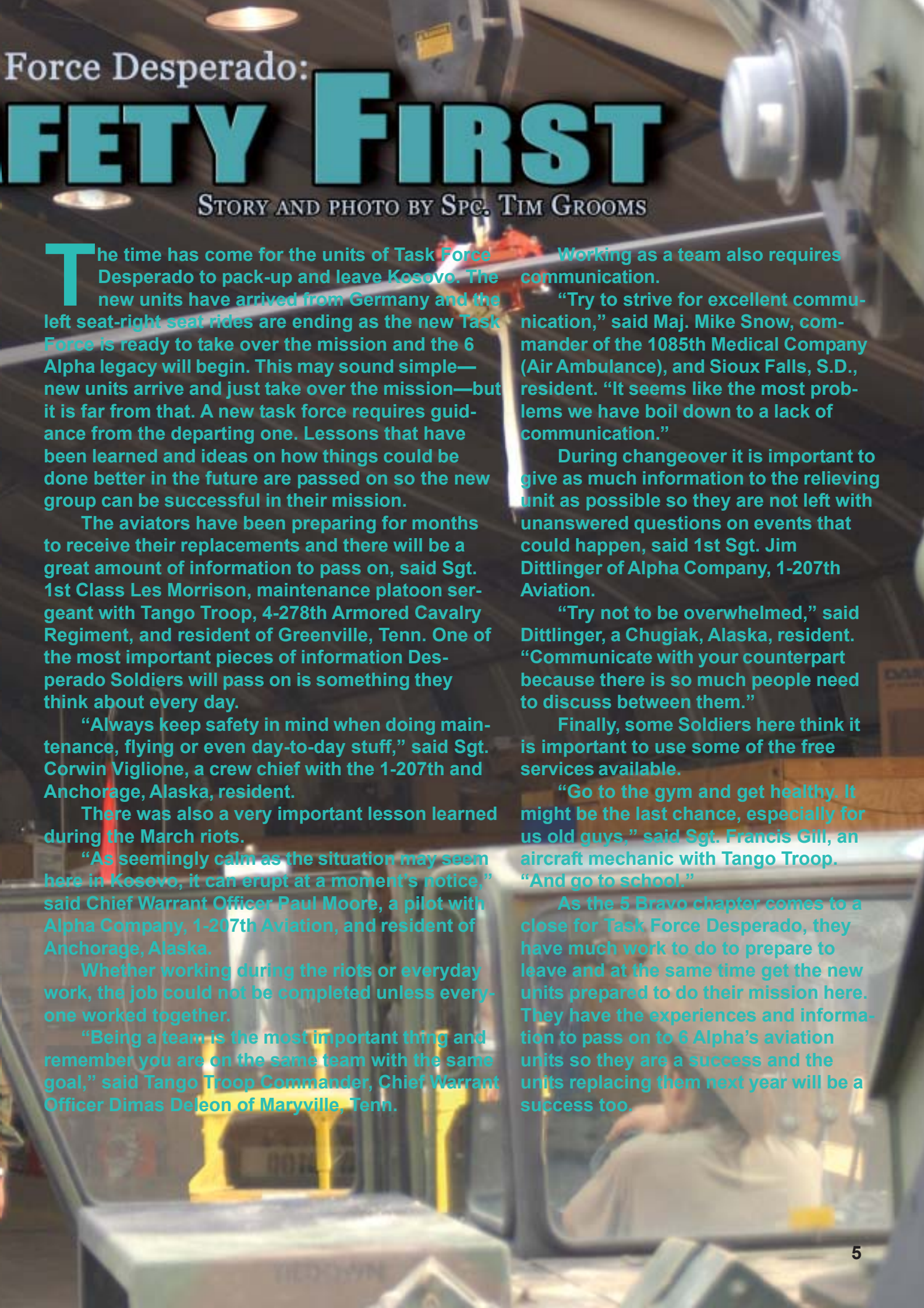
*Spc. Walter Dixon, a mechanic with Tango Troop, 4-278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, performs a 100-hour inspection on a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter. Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms. See page 4 for the story.*





*Soldiers of Tango Troop, 4-278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, work together to execute a 100-hour inspection on a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter.*





Force Desperado:

# FETY FIRST

STORY AND PHOTO BY SPC. TIM GROOMS

**T**he time has come for the units of Task Force Desperado to pack-up and leave Kosovo. The new units have arrived from Germany and the left seat-right seat rides are ending as the new Task Force is ready to take over the mission and the 6 Alpha legacy will begin. This may sound simple—new units arrive and just take over the mission—but it is far from that. A new task force requires guidance from the departing one. Lessons that have been learned and ideas on how things could be done better in the future are passed on so the new group can be successful in their mission.

The aviators have been preparing for months to receive their replacements and there will be a great amount of information to pass on, said Sgt. 1st Class Les Morrison, maintenance platoon sergeant with Tango Troop, 4-278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, and resident of Greenville, Tenn. One of the most important pieces of information Desperado Soldiers will pass on is something they think about every day.

“Always keep safety in mind when doing maintenance, flying or even day-to-day stuff,” said Sgt. Corwin Viglione, a crew chief with the 1-207th and Anchorage, Alaska, resident.

There was also a very important lesson learned during the March riots.

“As seemingly calm as the situation may seem here in Kosovo, it can erupt at a moment’s notice,” said Chief Warrant Officer Paul Moore, a pilot with Alpha Company, 1-207th Aviation, and resident of Anchorage, Alaska.

Whether working during the riots or everyday work, the job could not be completed unless everyone worked together.

“Being a team is the most important thing and remember you are on the same team with the same goal,” said Tango Troop Commander, Chief Warrant Officer Dimas Deleon of Maryville, Tenn.

Working as a team also requires communication.

“Try to strive for excellent communication,” said Maj. Mike Snow, commander of the 1085th Medical Company (Air Ambulance), and Sioux Falls, S.D., resident. “It seems like the most problems we have boil down to a lack of communication.”

During changeover it is important to give as much information to the relieving unit as possible so they are not left with unanswered questions on events that could happen, said 1st Sgt. Jim Dittlinger of Alpha Company, 1-207th Aviation.

“Try not to be overwhelmed,” said Dittlinger, a Chugiak, Alaska, resident. “Communicate with your counterpart because there is so much people need to discuss between them.”

Finally, some Soldiers here think it is important to use some of the free services available.

“Go to the gym and get healthy. It might be the last chance, especially for us old guys,” said Sgt. Francis Gill, an aircraft mechanic with Tango Troop. “And go to school.”

As the 5 Bravo chapter comes to a close for Task Force Desperado, they have much work to do to prepare to leave and at the same time get the new units prepared to do their mission here. They have the experiences and information to pass on to 6 Alpha’s aviation units so they are a success and the units replacing them next year will be a success too.

Task Force Bayonet

# Setting th





# e Table

## For Success

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**I**n the days winding down until the 5 Bravo to 6 Alpha transfer of authority, Soldiers of Task Force Bayonet are doing what they can to set their replacements up for success. They are completing new tasks and keeping up with old ones in order to leave Kosovo in better condition than when they arrived and passing on valuable information that will help the new units.

"Today we are doing pre-combat inspections and showdowns," said Staff Sgt. Ramar Davis, a squad leader with Charlie Company, 2-135th Infantry, as he verifies a checklist of items with his squad. "We do it about once a week to make sure the vehicles have the necessary equipment to make the mission a success. For instance we are checking everything from chemical lights to equipment necessary for marking landing zones or mines and anything we may need out in sector if we run across something."

Davis, a Minneapolis, Minn., resident, said there are many reasons it is important to keep PCIs up to date and he wants to pass this information onto the squad leader relieving him.

"The biggest thing is to make sure the next squad leader knows that pre-combat inspections are important," he said. "They may be more important than the mission itself because a small piece of equipment you are missing can make the whole patrol a failure. It does not matter if you know what the mission is; if you are lacking the necessary tools to do it, you could fail."

And the Bayonet Soldiers' leadership agreed.

"Pre-combat inspections for each and every mission are very important," said Capt. Dale Ross, commander of Bravo Company, 2-135th Infantry, and resident of New Brighton, Minn. One piece of equipment that must be checked during PCIs are snow chains and they will be very essential to the new units, said members of Davis' squad.

"Have fun this winter," said Spc. Daniel Born, an automatic weapons gunner with Charlie Company. "The weather can get pretty bad. Make sure you know how to use those snow chains and be safe."

The Soldiers also learned a lot about different cultures and lifestyles while here.

"Any time you're around a new culture, you get to see yourself through their eyes," said Born, a resident of Mankato, Minn. "It gives me more appreciation for what I have at home."

"Since this deployment started we have been to Kosovo, Germany and Bulgaria," he added. "A lot of the people's lifestyles are not the same as we have back in the states but everyone is content. Even though they do not have as much as we do, every time we are out, we are offered coffee and food and stuff like that. Anything they have they want to share with us. I think it is their way of showing their appreciation for what we are doing."

Davis agreed with Born and said he recommends everyone take advantage of the Fighter Management Pass Program trips to Bulgaria.

"It is a nice place to get time to relax," he said. "It is nice to be able to get to see another culture. It is a good experience to see another part of the world. I have nothing to say about Bulgaria except positive things."

Born said he advises other Soldiers to take time seeing the history of Sofia.

"Bulgaria was a blast. I would definitely want to go back again," said Born. "The people are really nice. The city has around 1.2 million people, but it has so much history. It is a really cool place to go. It's an awesome night club scene, but go and check out some of the museums and the history, you can learn a lot from it."

Many different lessons were learned by the Bayonet Soldiers during their time here, and they said hopefully they will be able to pass all of it along to the new Soldiers. Davis said the most important things affect him personally as a squad leader.

"As a squad leader you have to be in charge — not only of x number of Soldiers — this is a squad-based mission so the things you do are basically on you," Davis said. "You make a lot of the decisions yourself. You have to be confident within yourself, and you have to be a people person. You have to be able to talk with the people out in sector, so you also have to have public relations skills too."

# MPs Say: Interaction is key

Story and photo by Spc. Sean McCollum

It's been a hectic six months for the members of Task Force Dragoon, and one thing the members of Task Force Dragoon have learned during their deployment to Kosovo is not to expect a normal workday.

"It's an 8 hour shift, but with the preparations and the debriefs it always runs over," said Sgt. 1st Class William Nicholson, a platoon sergeant with the 514th MP Company and a resident of Snellville, NC. "It can easily push over into 12 to 13 hours."

The Task Force, made up of the 514th, the 192nd MP Detachment (Provost Marshal), and the 515th MP Detachment (Criminal Investigative Division), ensures a safe and secure environment for both the people of Kosovo and Soldiers. This has taken them into the middle of riots, to the borders of Greece and the Administrative Boundary Line with Serbia, to the Hotel Rodina in Sofia, Bulgaria, and to the detonation of the bridge in Kacanik. And though they have been here six months, some members of Dragoon said they feel like they're just getting used to running tactical missions in a garrison environment.

"It seems like just when we got to know our jobs, now we're getting ready to go," said Sgt. William Becker, an MP with the 514th from Fountain, NC. "Around here, the more you interact the more you learn," Becker said. "You do business assessments. And you really sit down and talk to the people in these stores out here."

The business assessments, said Becker, give a unique insight into the economy of Kosovo.

"You learn a lot about how they conduct business, how they make their money, or how they get by day-by-day."

Soldiers from the 192nd, who work closely with the Kosovo Police Service during law and order patrols, said they think the main lesson they're going to tell their replacements is to trust the KPS to do their job.

"It's their job now. It's their responsibility," said Sgt. Andrew Phillips, a Soldier with the 192nd and a resident of Bellevue, Neb., describing how MPs interact with the KPS. "We're basically there for assistance. We try to let them handle it unless they need help and then it's our responsibility."

That ultimate responsibility will change soon as the sun sets on the deployment of KFOR 5 Bravo. Members of Dragoon will impart their wisdom to the MPs of the incoming 6 Alpha rotation, and there will be new sheriffs in town.





***Sgt. Wendell Evans, a military police officer with the 514th MP Company, takes time to play soccer with Kosovar children during a patrol through the city of Kamenice/ Kosovska Kamenica.***



# Task Force Redhorse **LOOKING** Moving Forward



*Soldiers from Charlie Company, 682nd Engineer Battalion, untangle detonation cord to be used during a training exercise at Range Falcon Seven.*



# **BACK**



**Story and photos by Sgt. Jon Soucy**

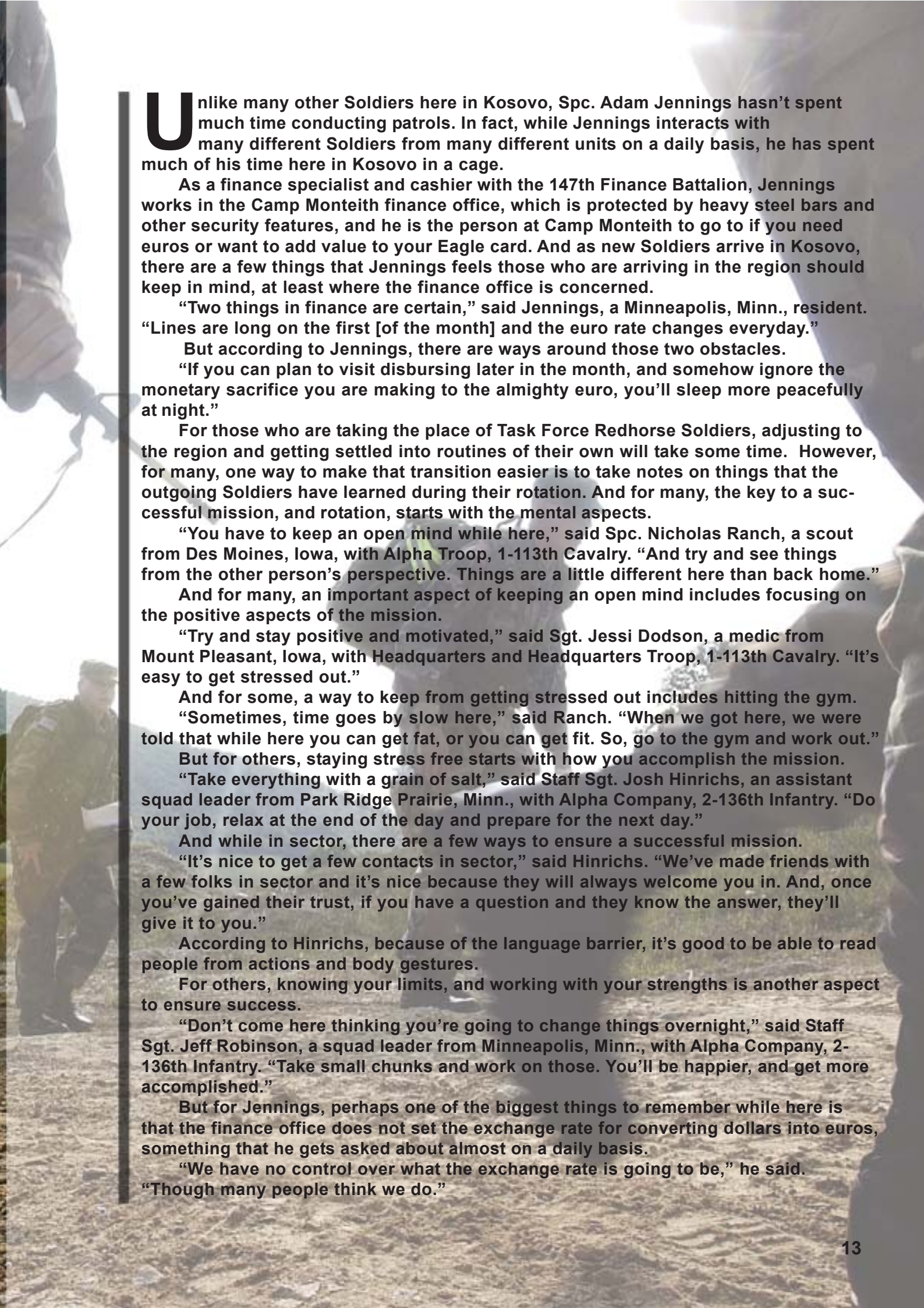


Task Force Redhorse  
**LOOKING BACK**  
—Moving Forward



*Soldiers from Task Force Redhorse slowly make their way up a hill near Uglare as they take part in the Spur Ride. The Spur Ride is a tradition carried over from the days of the horse cavalry where cavalymen were awarded a set of spurs after they proved they were experienced riders and underwent vigorous testing. In the modern version of the Spur Ride, Soldiers are tested on a variety of subjects and tasks such as weapons, tactics and land navigation. They also had to complete a roughly 10-mile road march while carrying a 30-pound ruck sack.*





**U**nlike many other Soldiers here in Kosovo, Spc. Adam Jennings hasn't spent much time conducting patrols. In fact, while Jennings interacts with many different Soldiers from many different units on a daily basis, he has spent much of his time here in Kosovo in a cage.

As a finance specialist and cashier with the 147th Finance Battalion, Jennings works in the Camp Monteith finance office, which is protected by heavy steel bars and other security features, and he is the person at Camp Monteith to go to if you need euros or want to add value to your Eagle card. And as new Soldiers arrive in Kosovo, there are a few things that Jennings feels those who are arriving in the region should keep in mind, at least where the finance office is concerned.

"Two things in finance are certain," said Jennings, a Minneapolis, Minn., resident. "Lines are long on the first [of the month] and the euro rate changes everyday."

But according to Jennings, there are ways around those two obstacles.

"If you can plan to visit disbursing later in the month, and somehow ignore the monetary sacrifice you are making to the almighty euro, you'll sleep more peacefully at night."

For those who are taking the place of Task Force Redhorse Soldiers, adjusting to the region and getting settled into routines of their own will take some time. However, for many, one way to make that transition easier is to take notes on things that the outgoing Soldiers have learned during their rotation. And for many, the key to a successful mission, and rotation, starts with the mental aspects.

"You have to keep an open mind while here," said Spc. Nicholas Ranch, a scout from Des Moines, Iowa, with Alpha Troop, 1-113th Cavalry. "And try and see things from the other person's perspective. Things are a little different here than back home."

And for many, an important aspect of keeping an open mind includes focusing on the positive aspects of the mission.

"Try and stay positive and motivated," said Sgt. Jessi Dodson, a medic from Mount Pleasant, Iowa, with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1-113th Cavalry. "It's easy to get stressed out."

And for some, a way to keep from getting stressed out includes hitting the gym.

"Sometimes, time goes by slow here," said Ranch. "When we got here, we were told that while here you can get fat, or you can get fit. So, go to the gym and work out."

But for others, staying stress free starts with how you accomplish the mission.

"Take everything with a grain of salt," said Staff Sgt. Josh Hinrichs, an assistant squad leader from Park Ridge Prairie, Minn., with Alpha Company, 2-136th Infantry. "Do your job, relax at the end of the day and prepare for the next day."

And while in sector, there are a few ways to ensure a successful mission.

"It's nice to get a few contacts in sector," said Hinrichs. "We've made friends with a few folks in sector and it's nice because they will always welcome you in. And, once you've gained their trust, if you have a question and they know the answer, they'll give it to you."

According to Hinrichs, because of the language barrier, it's good to be able to read people from actions and body gestures.

For others, knowing your limits, and working with your strengths is another aspect to ensure success.

"Don't come here thinking you're going to change things overnight," said Staff Sgt. Jeff Robinson, a squad leader from Minneapolis, Minn., with Alpha Company, 2-136th Infantry. "Take small chunks and work on those. You'll be happier, and get more accomplished."

But for Jennings, perhaps one of the biggest things to remember while here is that the finance office does not set the exchange rate for converting dollars into euros, something that he gets asked about almost on a daily basis.

"We have no control over what the exchange rate is going to be," he said. "Though many people think we do."



# **MED FALCON: EXPECT THE UNEX**

**STORY**





# EXPECTED

AND PHOTO BY SPC. SEAN MCCOLLUM



**F**or members of Task Force Medical Falcon, eternal vigilance is the price of learning the field of medicine. One day could be slow, with only Armed Forces Network's broadcast of Dr. Phil to while away the time. Other days there could be violence somewhere in the sector or even more unexpected events.

As an example of the busy times, Col. Marlin Brendsel, the executive officer for TFMF who is from Milwaukee, Wis., cited the case of two boys ages 12 and 13 who received severe electrical injuries to their arms in unrelated incidents and needed treatment. After being treated at the Pristina/Prishtine hospital, the boys were brought to Camp Bondsteel to save as much of their arms as possible and treat other injuries. In another incident a local 17-year-old boy was stabbed three times and brought to the hospital for treatment.

The lesson said Brendsel, is to always be ready mentally and staff-wise. The staff aspect is Brendsel's department.

"You have to watch with everything going on with [Fighter Management Pass Program], with schools — you have to really monitor closely the personnel to make sure that if there is an emergency you can still staff your hospital," Brendsel said. "We fight a real battle trying to make sure we still have enough professional staff to do the job."

The mental part, though, is up to the staff itself. Col. Harold Fenster, the hospital's general surgeon from Port Orange, Fla., learned this lesson firsthand when he was tasked with an operation the night of his arrival.

"My first night here just checking in, I had to do an appendectomy on a Soldier. We did that in the middle of the night and I've basically operated every night since I've been here." In that first hectic week, he said, he has treated Irish, American, and Italian Soldiers, as well as the occasional U.N. employee.

Fenster, who served at the Pentagon, in Operation Desert Shield, and has given numerous lectures on bioterrorism before being placed in the Retired Reserve in 2002, was called back to active duty to serve in Wurzburg, Germany, before deploying to Camp Bondsteel. And while Kosovo is relatively safe, the 30-year Army veteran warns not to be complacent.

"The closer you are to an actual war zone, the greater the chances are that you'll receive illness or injury when you least expect it. You always have to expect something when you least expect it."

And having been pulled out of the Retired Reserves, he also has some advice from his previous assignment to pass on.

"The last words of the last commander I worked for was 'Don't throw away your BDUs.'"

# FAR 51





# REWELL

# BRAVO



PHOTOS BY SGT. JON SOUCY, SPC. ROB BARKER, SPC. SEAN MCCOLLUM AND SPC. TIM GROOMS



# WEEK 6





# WELCOME ALPHA

PHOTOS BY SPC. ROB BARKER AND SPC. TIM GROOMS



# SOUL FOOD: MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPLAIN

## Lessons and Tips From the 5 Bravo Chaplain

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Tim Peterson

Welcome to all the KFOR 6 Alpha Soldiers! May God bless you, your families, and your service here in Kosovo!

Here are some suggestions from the 5 Bravo Chaplain for a successful deployment:

### 1. Remember the importance of being a Peacekeeper.

Jesus said, "Blessed are those who work for peace! They shall be called the Children of God!"

Soldiers want to see that their efforts are making a difference. It's always good when we can see signs of reconciliation – refugees and displaced persons returning to their homes, dialog between members of different ethnic groups, statements that people are determined to build a peaceful, multi-ethnic future for Kosovo.

Be thankful when you see signs of progress, but be ready for the times when it seems that nothing is changing. The conflict in Kosovo has deep roots. You are doing an important job in keeping the peace during your time here. You may be able to see some reconciliation, but there may be other times when it seems like very little progress is being made.

Remind yourself of the importance of being a peacekeeper – especially if you ever reach the point of feeling like no progress is being made toward peace. Your presence in Kosovo is giving the people a chance at reconciliation. You can't solve their problems, but you can help keep the peace while they work toward solutions.

### 2. Use your time in Kosovo to strengthen your family relationships.

It's hard being away from family and friends. You'll be busy here, but make sure to find the time to spend a significant amount of time communicating with your family.

I think it's especially important for



**Chaplain (Lt. Col.)  
Tim Peterson**

husbands and wives to try to strengthen their marriage during their deployment. We had several groups during the 5 Bravo deployment that talked about marriage. We read books together, we learned how to have more effective communication with our spouses, we prayed for our marriages. Many of our spouses back home read the same books that we were studying here.

It's certainly possible for couples to drift apart from each other during a long time of separation. Don't let that happen to you! Make a commitment together with your spouse to do things that will draw you closer together. Make a goal to be closer to



each other after this deployment than you ever were before.

3. Use your time in Kosovo to strengthen your relationship with God.

Many of our Soldiers have attended worship, gone to Bible studies, sang in a choir, and been involved with other Chapel activities. Some of these Soldiers did those things here in Kosovo even though they never did them in a Church back home.

One popular activity we had during the 5 Bravo rotation was a Spiritual Retreat to Greece, which involved attending classes on the travels and teaching of the Apostle Paul and then going to Greece to see some of the places where Paul lived and preached. You are living in a place that is very close to the birthplace of Christianity.

A deployment can be a great time to get closer to God. You are away from your normal life. You might have some extra time to read and think. You will maybe face some challenges where you can use some extra spiritual strength. The chapels are very close by. Make the effort to strengthen your relationship with God.

4. Use your time to do good things.

You have a lot of opportunities here – take advantage of them! Be faithful in doing your job – whatever it is, your job needs to be done. But it's also possible to take some classes, use the gyms, join a sports team, spend some time reading, and get involved in humanitarian projects.

Keep busy! It may seem like you're going to be here a long time, but the time will go quickly. And it will go more quickly if you're doing a lot of good things!

## Chapel Schedules

Please Note: There may be adjustments in the schedule with the change-over from 5 Bravo to 6 Alpha, especially for study groups. The Catholic Worship schedule is variable, depending on the availability of a Catholic Priest.

### Camp Bondsteel North Chapel

#### Sundays

0800 Liturgical Protestant

1100 Contemporary Protestant

1400 Gospel Service

1830 Catholic Mass (When a Catholic Priest is available)

#### Wednesdays

1930 Gospel Bible Study

2030 Gospel Choir Rehearsal

#### Fridays

1300 Islamic Prayer Time

1800 Shabbat Prayer Time

1930 Men/Women Gospel Bible Studies

#### Saturdays

1900 Gospel Choir Rehearsal

### Camp Bondsteel South Chapel

#### Sundays

0930 Protestant Service

1300 Latter Day Saints (LDS) Worship

1930 Protestant Worship

#### Mondays

1930 Strengthening Marriage Group

#### Tuesdays

1930 Bible Study

#### Wednesdays

1900 Purpose Driven Life Study in S. Chapel

#### Thursdays

1830 Music Team Practice

2030 LDS Bible Study

### Camp Monteith Chapel

#### Sundays

0830 Bible Study

1000 Traditional Protestant

1230 Roman Catholic Communion Service

1700 Contemporary Protestant

## Robots help Soldiers patrol Iraqi streets

By Sgt. Christina Rockhill

BAGHDAD, Iraq (Army News Service) — Soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division are using robots from the Rapid Equipping Force to help them on their patrols.

Soldiers of Company A, 91st Engineer Battalion have been using the multi-functional advanced remote control or MARC Bot on their daily patrols to sweep the streets of Baghdad for improvised explosive devices.

The MARC Bot, which resembles a large remote controlled car, has all-terrain wheels and a retractable arm with a wireless camera attached to it. The operator of the robot uses the remote control to navigate the MARC Bot closer to a possible IED. Then by watching a monitor on the controller, he can determine whether or not it is an IED.

Sgt. 1st Class Chad Carpenter, of Rapid Equipping Force, said the increased distance between the Soldier and the IED is an obvious advantage when dealing with explosives.

"It allows stand-off from IEDs, for Soldiers to go ahead and detect them, which does two things," he said. "Number one it helps save their lives in case the thing goes off, and number two, if it's not an IED it will allow them to go ahead, get it off the road and continue the mission rather than blocking [the road] off and waiting for [an explosive ordnance disposal team]." Spc. Randall Archie is the MARC Bot operator for Company A, 91 ENG, and said that the MARC Bot not only saves lives, it also saves time and embarrassment.

"It's kind of embarrassing whenever you call EOD and sit around blocking off a main road for an hour or two hours waiting for them to get out there, and then they show up and it's just a bag of trash," he said. Archie said even though his crew hasn't found any IEDs with the robot, he said it's more effective than the usual tools they use.

"It allows us to get eyes on," he said. "You can see a lot with [binoculars] and everything else, but with this you're right on it. It makes it a lot nicer."

Sweeping the streets for explosives with a robot can be a daunting task.

"It's kind of weird at first but once they get used to it they love it," Carpenter said.

Maj. Carlos Munson, the 1st Cav. Div. Rapid Equipping Force Liaison, said the \$3,000 MARC Bot is operator friendly and easy to use.

"Initially [the Soldiers] are a little nervous because the robots are expensive, but once they got the tactics, techniques and procedures down for utilizing a robot, the patrols tend to be more confident and able to identify a suspect IED," he said.

Munson said they have only lost a couple of robots from explosions, but said it's better than losing a couple of Soldiers.

"In the past, a lot of Soldiers have gotten injured by walking up on suspect IEDs to check them out," he said. "This way if the IED blows up, the only thing that's hurt is the robot and we can easily replace a robot."

(Editor's note: Sgt. Christina Rockhill serves with 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs.)

## Army offers bigger enlistment bonuses

By Sgt. Lorie Jewell

FORT KNOX, Ky. (Army News Service) — The Army is beefing up cash bonus programs for new recruits and allowing them to collect from a combination of programs they qualify for.

Meeting the right criteria could net a recruit as much as \$15,000 for a three-year enlistment and \$20,000 for signing up for four years in some high-priority jobs, said Douglas Smith, public affairs officer for the U.S. Army Recruiting Command. The maximum available for qualifying recruits going into non-priority military occupational specialties for three years is \$10,000.

Three-year enlistment bonuses were previously capped at \$6,000.

"The fastest way to reach the maximum is to ship quickly, have some college, and pick the right MOS," Smith said.

Recruiting and retention rates are holding steady despite concerns about current operations straining the force, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker told reporters in a Pentagon briefing last month. The active Army is projected to reach 101 percent of its recruiting goal for the current fiscal year, Schoomaker said.

But with recruiting being a key tool in the Army's effort to grow the force by 30,000 Soldiers, Schoomaker said officials would continue looking at ways to keep the rates on target — including bonuses.

Enlisting for at least three years in a critical-need job — infantryman (11X) or cannon crewmember (13B), for instance — and reporting to basic training by Sept. 27 brings a \$6,000 bonus to qualifying recruits, Smith said. The bonus is \$9,000 for high-priority jobs like fire support specialist (13F), petroleum supply specialist (92F) or food service operations (92G), with the same report date.

"That's a limited time bonus that could roll over or change, depending on the needs of the Army," Smith said.

College education can earn a qualified recruit even more money. A bachelor's degree could net an \$8,000 bonus; associate or two-year degrees, a \$7,000 bonus; \$6,000 for high school graduates with 60 or more semester hours; and \$3,000 for 30 to 59 semester hours.

The Army previously offered bonuses of \$3,000 and \$6,000 for college-level education, Smith said.

Under the Civilian Acquired Skill program, having certain civilian job skills can bring a qualified recruit a \$3,000 bonus.

Additional information about the bonus programs is available from a local Army recruiter or at the recruiting command's web site: [www.goarmy.com](http://www.goarmy.com).

"If Soldiers know of anyone who is interested in joining, this is a good time to enlist," Smith said.



# SECTION Q N' A:

## SOLDIER

**What are your expectations of Kosovo?**

**Sgt. Dave Bradford**

*"I just plan on doing my job and completing the mission after six months."*



Photo by Spc. Rob Barker

*Sgt. Dave Bradford is an explosive ordinance disposal team member with the 734th EOD.*

**Staff Sgt. Jamison Stephens**

*"My expectation is to just complete the mission."*



Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms

*Staff Sgt. Jamison Stephens is a motor sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 37th Brigade Combat Team.*

**Sgt. Cheyenne Couch**

*"I plan on making the best of my time here."*



Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms

*Sgt. Cheyenne Couch is a paralegal specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 37th Brigade Combat Team.*

**Col. Joseph Maranto**



Photo by Spc. Sean McCollum

*"My expectation is that I may teach by example as many people as I can. It is in the caring for the welfare of one another that the strengths of a society are built."*

*Col. Joseph Maranto, right, an optometrist with Task Force Med Falcon, gives his patient, Spc. Aaron Gagnepain, an eye exam.*

## Scenes of Kosovo



Photo by Sgt. Jon Soucy

# The sun setting in Desivojce